

Assessment of the Efficiency of Virtual Orthodontic Consultations during COVID-19

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Abstract : Aims: We aimed to assess the efficiency of 'Attend Anywhere' orthodontic clinics within a district general hospital during COVID- 19. Our secondary aim was to pilot a questionnaire to assess patient satisfaction with virtual orthodontic appointments. Design: The study design is a service evaluation including pilot questionnaire. Methods: The average number of patients seen per virtual clinic and the number of patients failing to attend was compared to face-to-face clinics. The capability of virtual appointments to be successful in preventing the need for a face-to-face appointment was assessed. Patients were invited to complete a telephone pilot questionnaire focusing on patient satisfaction and accessibility. Results: There was a small increase in the number of patients failing to attend virtual appointments, with a third of the patients who did not attend failing to receive the appointment link. 81.9% of virtual clinic appointments were successful and prevented the need for a face-to-face appointment. Overall patients were very satisfied with their virtual orthodontic appointment and the majority required no assistance to access the service. Conclusions: The use of 'Attend Anywhere' clinics in orthodontics offers patients and clinicians an effective and efficient alternative to face-to-face appointments that patients on average find easy to use and completely satisfactory.

Keywords : clinics, COVID, orthodontics, patient satisfaction, virtual

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